

ROBERT JEMISON PLANTATION  
(Cherokee)  
(Bryce Hospital)  
Birmingham Industrial District  
Byler Road  
Northport  
Tuscaloosa County  
Alabama

HABS No. AL-941

HABS  
ALA  
63-NOPO,  
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, DC 20013-7127

ADDENDUM TO  
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL & DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD  
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Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 37127  
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**Location:** On high plain above Warrior River, along the old Byler Road, just west of the Tuscaloosa Airport and Northport in Tuscaloosa County, Alabama.

**Date of Construction:** c. 1830

**Description:** Remaining at the plantation site today is a mile-long alley of oaks dating to the early 19th century, leading from the Byler Road to a state mental health facility housed in a 1920s Neo-Classical mansion. Several other mental health buildings are located on the large former-plantation grounds.

**Significance:** Plantation site associated with a leading Southern planter and industrialist.

**Project Information:** This report is based upon written documentation donated by the Birmingham Historical Society, reformatted to HABS/HAER guidelines.

## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

A wealthy planter, Robert Jemison (1802-71) owned the Cherokee plantation and five others, 10,000 acres of land, grist mills, saw mills, a stage coach line, livery stable, and coal and ore mines. He assisted in promoting the Selma, Rome, and Dalton Railroad and the Northeast and Southwest Railroad (now part of the Southern - Norfolk-Southern System). Jemison served as a state legislator in the Alabama House of Representatives from 1840 to 1850 and the senate from 1851 to 1863. In 1863 he was also elected to the Confederate Senate. In 1860 he decided to move to the city and began construction of his 1305 Greensboro Avenue house in Tuscaloosa. Robert Jemison Sr. of Birmingham and William Carlos Jemison, New South Mayor and developer of Tuscaloosa, are his nephews.

Named "Cherokee" for the gratitude of an ancestor of Priscilla Taylor Jemison (Mrs. Robert) was captured and released by unfriendly Indians, this Robert Jemison plantation was established after the Jemisons came to the area in 1822. The plantation house, which burned at the turn of the century.

The plantation site, later known as the Hargrove land (Jemison's only daughter married Andrew Coleman Hargrove - d. 1895) was given to Bryce Hospital, which constructed a 1920s Neo-Colonial style building at the foot of the alley as part of Bryce Hospital.

## Sources Consulted

Marvin Harper Interview, 8/12/91, Marjorie L. White

Site Visit, 8/12/91